

out that our other North American species, particularly the Barn and Cliff Swallows, should not also undergo a general moult about the end of August.

The principal literature of the family of Swallows is passed in review (pp. xxi-lxvii), the early French and English authors justly coming in for detailed notice; hence it seems all the more incongruous to find no notice of Linnaeus earlier than 1766 (12th ed. Syst. Nat.)!

The plates, drawn by Mr. Wyatt and printed by Minturn Brothers, are well done. The text is very full and satisfactory, the biographies and the geographic distribution of the species, when known, being treated at length, a special and unusual feature being the numerous colored maps showing the ranges of the species. The North American species, owing perhaps to the fact that their habits and distribution are, as a rule, better known than those of most other species, are treated at unusual length, 11 pages being devoted to the Rough-winged Swallow, 20 to the Sand Martin, 22 to the White-bellied Swallow, and 24 each to the Cliff Swallow and the Barn Swallow. Great pains has been taken to work out the distribution of some of the species, as for example the White-bellied Swallow, the colored map (Pl. 35) showing, as nearly as could be ascertained, both its breeding and migratory ranges.

In regard to points of nomenclature we should not always be willing to subscribe to the practice here followed, as where *Progne purpurea* (Linn., 1766) is preferred to '*P. subis* (Linn., 1758), and where *Petrochelidon swainsoni* Scl. (1858) is adopted in preference to *P. melanogaster* (Swain., 1827), because the latter does not chance to be 'appropriate.' But where there is so much that is worthy of commendation, it becomes ungracious to criticise what is not wholly to our taste.—J. A. A.

Ornithology in the Standard Dictionary.¹—The specialist determines the advance made in a knowledge of his chosen subject by reviewing the literature relating to it, but to learn what part of this has become

¹ A | Standard Dictionary | of the | English Language | Upon Original Plans | Designed to Give, in Complete and Accurate Statement, in the Light of the Most | Recent Advances in Knowledge, and in the Readiest Form for Popular Use, | the Orthography, Pronunciation, Meaning, and Etymology of all the Words and the Meaning of Idiomatic Phrases in the Speech and Literature of the English- | Speaking Peoples | Prepared by | More than Two Hundred Specialists and Other Scholars | Under the Supervision of | Isaac K. Funk, D. D., Editor-in-Chief | Francis A. March, LL. D., L. H. D., Consulting Editor | Daniel S. Gregory, D. D., Managing Editor | Associate Editors: | John Denison Champlin, M. A. Rossiter Johnson, Ph. D., LL. D. | Arthur E. Bostwick, Ph. D. | Complete in One Volume | New York | Funk & Wagnalls Company | London and Toronto | 1895 | Printed in the United States. Roy. 4to. pp. xx, 2318, numerous cuts in the text and both colored and uncolored full-page plates.

common knowledge by being rendered available to the reading world at large, he must turn to works of reference. The Century Dictionary was not comparable with anything that preceded it, but in the Standard Dictionary we have a volume which may fairly be contrasted with Webster, our previously generally accepted authority.

Making our comparison from a purely ornithological standpoint we turn at once to the noun "bird" with the following results: Webster gives simply the literal and accepted meaning of the word followed by a comment on its use in place of the more correct term "fowl." The Standard Dictionary gives both definitions with two additional unimportant ones and supplements these by a figure showing the topography of the external parts, of which forty-seven are designated, and a full-page plate illustrating twenty-two species in color. Further comparison confirms this surprising difference in treatment of ornithological terms. Especially is this true in the case of more technical words as for example: *Caligula*, *dromæognathus*, *schizopelmous*, *schizognathus*, *zygodactylous*, etc., all of which are illustrated. On the other hand we find the special ornithological meaning of such common words as "penciled" or "speckled" explained by cuts of a penciled feather and speckled egg. Zoögeography, a term unknown to Webster, is illustrated by a map giving the faunal provinces of the world. We regret, however, to see that the divisions of Sclater and Wallace are given rather than the more recent systems, which have been largely accepted by later students of this subject. Genera are, as a rule, omitted, but orders, suborders, families and subfamilies of birds are included with brief but satisfactory definitions, as for example: *Anatidæ*, "A family of natatorial birds with the edges of the bill lamellate or toothed, generally including ducks, geese, swans, and mergansers." *Oscines*, "a subclass of passerines, especially those with several pairs of muscles attached to the upper bronchial semi-rings, forming an apparatus for singing; including thrushes, sparrows, etc."

Species are given only under English names and the adjectival form of the family is frequently made to do duty as a definition. Thus the Albatross, Cormorant, and Flamingo are defined respectively as diomedoid, phalacrocoracoid, and phœnicopteroid birds. Aside from this rather objectionable method the matter under species is clear and full, descriptions of plumage and structure, range, popular synonyms and occasionally characteristic habits being given.

The work is lavishly illustrated, birds receiving their full share of the cuts, our American species being particularly well cared for in this respect. Thus, taking a letter at random, we find twenty-three species figured under S. These figures are evidently largely adapted from various sources and while often antiquated are for the greater part helpful.

The special nature of this review prevents us from calling attention to the numberless admirable features of this magnificent work, but we

console ourselves with the thought that its low price renders it accessible to every one. It is a remarkable literary achievement; fully worthy of the time in which it appears.—F. M. C.

Dwight on the Ipswich Sparrow.¹—Dr. Dwight's memoir doubtless constitutes the most complete biography which has ever been published of any North American bird. Beginning with its discovery by Mr. Maynard at Ipswich, Mass., in 1868, scarcely a fact in the recorded history of this coast-loving Sparrow is omitted, while the author's experience with it in its summer home enables him to present a monograph admirable for its completeness. From 1868 to 1885 the pages of our text-books, ornithological and natural history journals, show an increasing number of records of the occurrence of this species in late fall and winter on our coasts from New Brunswick to Delaware. The fact of its regular presence in numbers was then definitely established and, in the oft-quoted words of Mr. Dutcher, it was "relegated to the commonplace." In 1890 it was recorded by Dr. Rives from Virginia and by Mr. Worthington from Georgia, but until 1894 its summer home was a matter of speculation. Strong evidence was furnished, it is true, that the bird bred on Sable Island. It remained for Dr. Dwight, however, to finally settle the question by visiting the island from May 28 to June 14, 1894.

As a result of his visit he gives us chapters on the 'History of Sable Island,' 'Physical Aspect of Sable Island,' 'Climate,' 'Flora,' 'Mammals,' 'Birds,' and an extended bibliography.

Sable Island is twenty miles long with a maximum width of one mile. It is described as of probably glacial origin and consists of rolling sand-hills sometimes eighty feet in height resembling in almost every particular, save greater size, the stretches of sand dunes to be found along our Atlantic seaboard. In the hollows among the hills, however, "grasses grow luxuriantly in many places, and a large part is carpeted with the evergreen Crowberry (*Empetrum nigrum* L.) and Juniper (*Juniperus nana* Willd.) which are very characteristic productions."

Distant eighty-six miles from Nova Scotia, Sable Island is farther from the mainland than any continental island off the coast of eastern North America. Its fauna is, therefore, of peculiar interest. No indigenous mammals were found. Many species of both water and land birds occur as transients, but only ten species were nesting at the time of Dr. Dwight's visit. These he gives in the relative order of their abundance as follows: *Sterna paradisæca*, *Sterna hirundo*, *Ægialitis semipalmata*, *Ammodramus princeps*, *Tringa minutilla*, *Ægialitis meloda circumcincta*, *Sterna dougalli*, *Merganser serrator*, *Anas obscura*, and *Actitis macularia*.

¹ Memoirs of the Nuttall Ornithological Club. No. II. The Ipswich Sparrow (*Ammodramus princeps* Maynard) and its Summer Home. By Jonathan Dwight, Jr., M. D., with a colored plate. Cambridge, Mass. Published by the Club. August, 1895. 4to. pp. 56; Pl. I. \$1.50.